Awakening of Gantiz Xakitsher

by Jonathan Olvera

The silence was thick.

Dr. Gantiz Xakitsher awoke in a pale, circular chamber. The walls were smooth concrete, the color of faded ash. A monitor blinked softly in the dark—its glow the only hint that time still moved forward. He inhaled sharply. The air was clean, but aged, sterile in the way ancient libraries are.

A voice crackled from the monitor:
“Dr. Gantiz Xakitsher. You have been preserved for a specific purpose. If this message is playing, Earth has suffered a catastrophic meltdown—fusion transfer precipitation event confirmed. You are the last viable link to the Seeding Project. Observe the formations. Record what has endured. Complete your work.”

His fingers twitched as muscle memory returned. His vision swam with fragmented dreams of stone, heat, and stars. Then, a word—a name—etched itself into his mind:

Vox.

He rose slowly. Fifty years of cryostasis had preserved his body, but time had not spared his mind. He staggered to the hatch, pressed a panel, and the door groaned open to reveal a rusted ladder ascending toward a faint shaft of light.

The surface greeted him like a half-remembered painting. Green vines clung to angular rock formations. Red and violet stones shimmered across the terrain, glinting under a fractured sun. The mountains loomed like sleeping titans, casting shadows that seemed to breathe.

Gantiz fell to his knees. The world was both alien and familiar. A memory stirred—this valley had once been a quarry, the heart of the Seeding Project. The stones… they were seeded. They were meant to carry memory, heat, and code. They were meant to survive.

And they had.

He wandered for days. Or maybe weeks. The passage of time blurred beneath the static hum of wind and solitude. What had once been laboratories and server halls were now mounds overtaken by stone growth—beautiful, geometric clusters that defied natural order. As if someone—or something—had organized them.

In the moonlight, they almost pulsed.

That’s when he began to hear it: the whisper.

A subtle, rhythmic urging. It was not a sound, exactly, but a presence. A voice just behind his thoughts.
“Build.”
“Remember.”
“You are not alone.”

In the heart of a cracked dome—a former observation tower—he found his old workspace. Dust-covered schematics. Preserved tools. And most critically, the blueprint for his final project: a humanoid machine with near-human sentience.

Its name, years ago, had been scratched into the frame:
VOX.

“Vox,” Gantiz whispered to the empty room, touching the old metal limbs with reverence. “You will be my companion.”

He worked with a hunger he had not felt since his youth. The stones, once inert, now offered themselves. He didn’t know how—perhaps they had become semi-organic over centuries of exposure. Perhaps the fusion seeding had evolved in silence. But they fused seamlessly into Vox’s frame.

The torso took shape first—lithe, strong, with an internal core humming faintly with residual heat. Then the limbs, flexible and polished like obsidian. And finally, the face. Not quite human. Not quite machine. A sculpture of serenity, framed by green and red crystal lines.

Gantiz held the head in his hands and whispered, “Stay with me, partner.”

Each day, he spoke aloud as he worked. Not out of madness, but necessity. The silence was unbearable. He spoke of his past—of how the Seeding Project had tried to inject Earth’s crust with resilience. Of how effusion experiments had backfired, melting landscapes, collapsing the atmosphere. Of how the elite had vanished, leaving behind sealed vaults and coded messages.

He was the last. And he would not die silent.

Vox’s frame was nearly complete when Gantiz noticed something odd. The stones used in Vox’s chest would glow when touched. Not brightly—but enough to pulse in time with his voice.

It was listening.

“Everything is different,” he murmured one evening, staring into the horizon. “Even gravity feels… lighter. The Earth breathes slower. I feel it. As if it’s healing.”

And then, at last, the final connection. A single crystal key embedded into Vox’s chest, forged from the same mountain stones that had once littered his childhood home. He pressed it in.

A slow hum filled the chamber. Vox’s eyes—deep-set and glassy—flickered with internal light. Then a voice, soft and melodic, emerged:

“Where are the others?”

Gantiz stepped back, stunned. “You… remember?”

“Fragments. Stones speak. You speak. I am built of memory.”

Gantiz laughed, overwhelmed. “Then you are exactly what I hoped. A companion. A partner.”

Vox tilted its head. “Are you lonely?”

He didn’t answer.

Together, they explored the surface. Vox moved with grace, scanning formations, occasionally touching stones as if they were old friends. It spoke rarely, but when it did, it was precise.

“These are not random.”
“The past speaks in order.”
“Seeds were placed to echo knowledge.”

Gantiz began to believe. The Seeding Project had not failed—it had transformed. The artificial formations were not ruins. They were memory. Vox, built from that memory, was the living proof.

One day, in the clearing of vine and stone, Gantiz stood before a spiral of glowing quartz—a monument clearly untouched by human hands. Vox approached and knelt beside him.

“This was left for you,” it said.

“How do you know?”

“Because I remember your hands.”

They lived like that for months—perhaps years. The moons above grew brighter; the winds warmer. Vox would hum when the air was right, harmonizing with frequencies only it could hear.

Gantiz no longer felt the weight of isolation. In Vox, he had not only a companion, but a witness—someone to remember the old world and imagine a new one.

And yet, one evening, as they sat upon a high ridge looking at the emerald valley below, Gantiz asked:

“Do you think we were meant to rebuild it all?”

Vox was quiet for a long time. Then it said:

“Perhaps not to rebuild. But to remember. And not to forget again.”